ERIC Document Resume | See Instruction Sheet | DATE OF RESUME | DATE RECEIVED

A. PUBLICATION DATA

1. ERIC NUMBER: ED001591 | 2. ORIGINATOR CONTROL NO(S).: N.A. | 3. IDENTIFICATION NO.: N.A.

DO NOT WRITE IN SPACE BELOW

4. AUTHOR(S): The Commission on Equal Opportunities in Education
California State Department of Education, Sacramento, California

5. TITLE OF DOCUMENT ABSTRACTED:
Recommendations to the Oakland Board of Education on Certain Ethnic Problems in the Oakland City Unified School District

6. PUBLICATION TITLE:
N.A.

7. EDITOR(S):
N.A.

8. [illegible] Commission on Equal Opportunities in Education
ORIG. ST. California State Dept. of Education
CITY, STATE Sacramento, California
INST/LOC CODE

9. PUBLISHER OR SOURCE
Commission on Equal Opportunities in Edu., Cal. State Dept. of Edu.

10. VOL.	11. PAGES	12. MO./YR.	13. TOTAL PP.
N.A.	N.A.	1964	21

MICROFILM COPY AVAILABLE: YES ☒ NO ☐

COPYRIGHT GRANTED: YES ☐ NO ☒

COPYRIGHT RELEASE FILED: YES ☐ NO ☐

TYPE OF REPORT: PROPOSAL ☐ IN-PROGRESS ☒ FINAL ☐ FOLLOW-UP ☐

OTHER ERIC REFERENCES:

ERIC SATELLITE CODE

B. INDEXING DATA

14. SUBJECT AREA

15. TYPE OF ENDEAVOR: report

16. INDEXING TERMS (6-12)

ethnic distribution	de facto segregation	equal opportunities	
school attendance	Board of Education	racial discrimination	
quality education	intergroup relations	religious discrimination	
		discrimination	

17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS)

The commission on Equal Opportunities in Education was required by law to provide assistance and advice in the solution of problems relating to racial, religious, and other discrimination in connection with the employment of certificated employees, the ethnic distribution of pupils, and the establishment of school attendance areas. Reports on the studies together with information made available by the Superintendent of Schools provided the Commission with much of the background material needed to reach its conclusions.

The recommendations included a master plan designed to improve the quality of education for all children and to eliminate or lessem the impact of de facto segregation at all levels. The Board of Education should call upon appropriate federal, state, county and local agencies to join forces in reversing the trend toward further segregation. Channels through which complaints, questions, and problems involving intergroup relations could be evaluated should be prowided. Advisory groups should be organized to assist in the assessment of the quality of intergroup relations and programs.

ERIC No.

18. SOURCE OF ABSTRACT

C. FUNDING DATA

19. SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION,

20. DIVISION OR DEPT.

21. CONTRACT NO.

PROJECT NO.

22. TOTAL COST OF PROJECT

23. DURATION OR PROJECT

U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
Office of Education

ERIC Form 1

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ED001591

RECOMMENDATIONS

TO THE

OAKLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION

ON

CERTAIN ETHNIC PROBLEMS

IN THE OAKLAND CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

BY

THE COMMISSION ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN EDUCATION

CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Max Rafferty

Superintendent of Public Instruction

Bennett O. Stalvey

MAX RAFFERTY
Superintendent of Public Instruction
and Director of Education

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Associate Superintendent; Chief,
Division of Higher Education

September 22, 1964

TO THE OAKLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION:

Pursuant to our discussions with members of the State Board of Education and your resolution of May 19, 1964, requesting the advice and assistance of the Commission on Equal Opportunities in Education in connection with certain ethnic problems in the Oakland Public Schools, I am pleased to transmit herewith the recommendations of the Commission.

Sincerely,

Max Rafferty

OAKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
1025 SECOND AVENUE, OAKLAND 6, CALIFORNIA
TELEPHONE 836-2622
AREA CODE 415

OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT

May 19, 1964

RECEIVED
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
MAY 24 1964

Dr. Max Rafferty
Superintendent of Public Instruction
California State Board of Education
721 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, California

Dear Dr. Rafferty:

At the meeting of May 19, 1964, the Oakland Board of Education authorized me to request the services of the State Commission on Equal Educational Opportunities in assisting and offering advice relating to problems involving the ethnic distribution of pupils and school attendance areas and/or equality of educational opportunity.

It certainly will be the desire of our staff to give every assistance possible to the Commission and their staff in their study of these problems in the Oakland Unified School District. A copy of the letter to Mr. Thomas W. Braden is attached.

Cordially,

Stuart S. Phillips
Superintendent of Schools

SSP/w
Attach.

Commission on Equal Opportunities
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INTRODUCTION

Upon the request of a school district, the Commission on Equal Opportunities in Education is required by law to provide assistance and advice in the solution of problems relating to racial, religious, and other discrimination in connection with the employment of certificated employees, the ethnic distribution of pupils, and the establishment of school attendance areas. (See Appendix A) The recommendations outlined in this report are being submitted by the Commission in response to a request for its services by the Oakland Board of Education.

Since late May, the Commission staff has given top priority to an examination of ethnic problems in the Oakland City Unified School District. In every case where it was possible to do so, other commitments were cancelled or postponed to meet this assignment. A member of the Bureau of Education Research staff of the Department of Education worked closely with the Commission staff and provided technical assistance.

It was found, after preliminary inquiries, that the City of Oakland and its public schools have been the subject of many studies in recent months. (See Appendix B) A careful analysis was made of reports that seemed to be relevant to the question of equal educational opportunity. Reports on the studies together with information made available by the Superintendent of Schools provided the Commission with much of the background material needed to reach its conclusions.

Members of the staff have talked at length with individuals in the Oakland community, representatives of teacher organizations, members of

the Board, and community groups in an effort to obtain a variety of viewpoints. The Superintendent of Schools arranged for the Commission staff to visit each high school site as well as a number of the junior high schools. These visits provided the staff with an opportunity to observe the transportation routes, distance factors, and topography of each high school attendance area.

The staff noted a number of facets of the school program which seemed to require evaluation in terms of equal educational opportunity criteria. Staff and time limitations, however, made it impossible to examine each of them. Therefore, the absence of recommendations should not be construed to mean that certain omitted areas lack importance or urgency. Recommendations have been limited to those areas which, in our opinion, involve the most crucial aspects of ethnic problems in the district and embrace basic considerations upon which the solution to other problems depend.

Because the Skyline High School boundary situation repeatedly emerged as a symbolic irritant and barrier in the view of many advocates of equal opportunities in education, a major recommendation has been made in this connection. Other recommendations include:

(1) The establishment of a Master Plan

(2) Joint participation by school authorities and other agencies in projects designed to cope with social change

(3) The establishment of procedures to handle complaints, problems, and questions relative to equal educational opportunities

(4) The involvement and participation of professional and classified staff in working out solutions to problems in intergroup relations

The recommendations are made in accordance with what we believe to be sound educational practices and enlightened intergroup relations. They are not intended to result in a panacea. As a matter of fact, we believe that the dynamics of social change in Oakland require that school policies and practices be constantly assessed. Prompt, appropriate action should be taken whenever and wherever it is needed to insure equal educational opportunity for each child.

We trust the recommendations will provide a basis on which a majority of those who have a stake in public education in Oakland can agree. At the very least, we hope they will provide a foundation upon which good faith can be established. Where misunderstandings and uncertainties exist, it is not enough to establish an excellent educational program. It is of primary importance that parents <u>believe</u> that the program is excellent and <u>their</u> children have access to it. Only then will there be the confidence, community cooperation, and support which will make it possible to educate all the children of all the people in accordance with their ability and the demands of our time. We dare to hope that the recommendations submitted will be of assistance to the Board in achieving these ends.

BACKGROUND AND CONCLUSIONS

Although de jure school segregation--the racial separation of pupils by law--was declared unconstitutional by the U. S. Supreme Court in Brown v. Board of Education, de facto school segregation has become an issue which plagues many school districts in the cities of the North and West. De facto school segregation results from the concentration of a homogeneous racial group in an area served by a neighborhood school. Frequently, groups and organizations have contrived to keep certain ethnic groups contained in a particular neighborhood. In other instances, the containment has been the result of socio-economic conditions. Often it has been a combination of forces. But, whatever the cause of de facto segregation, the impact upon the schools is becoming increasingly dramatic and explosive.

For the first six years following the 1954 Brown v. Board of Education U. S. Supreme Court decision, efforts to desegregate the public schools in the Southern part of the United States commanded the nation's attention. Then, in January, 1961, U. S. District Judge Irving R. Kaufman ruled that the Board of Education of New Rochelle, New York, had gerrymandered school attendance boundaries to maintain a predominately Negro school. This was the first case in which a Northern community was adjudged to have violated the constitutional provisions as laid down in Brown v. Board of Education.

The impact of the ruling upon the cities of the North and West was immediate. At first, many school boards disclaimed any responsibility

for the problem. However, some state and district boards of education began formulating policies relating to "racial imbalance" in the public schools.

On June 14, 1962, the California State Board of Education issued a statement declaring that "some of our schools are becoming racially segregated in fact, and . . . this challenge to equality of educational opportunity must be met with the full thrust of our legal authority and moral leadership." (See Appendix C) Subsequently the State Board established regulations that require district boards, when acquiring school sites and establishing attendance areas, to take steps to lessen the impact of de facto segregation. (See Appendix D)

On June 27, 1963, California's Supreme Court filed its opinion in Jackson v. Pasadena City Unified School District. In this decision, the Court stated:

> "Residential segregation is in itself an evil. . . . Where such segregation exists it is not enough for a school board to refrain from affirmative discriminatory conduct . . . The right to an equal opportunity for education and the harmful consequences of segregation require that school boards take steps, insofar as reasonably feasible, to alleviate racial imbalance in schools regardless of its cause."

Although the statement of the Court went beyond the precise issue involved in the case, the dictum clearly defined a school board's responsibility in dealing with situations of ethnic imbalance.

In recent months, issues relating to de facto segregation and education in Oakland have been placed in full public view and debate.

In part, Oakland's troubles spring from the time when the clouds of World War II began rolling over Europe and subsequently the Far East, and workers by the tens of thousands came to man the Bay Area war efforts.

Between 1940 and 1960, the total population of six Bay Area counties almost doubled. Even more dramatic was the growth of the Negro population which increased more than twelvefold during the same period. The reluctance of nearby communities such as San Leandro, San Lorenzo, Hayward, Piedmont, Orinda, Lafayette, Walnut Creek, and Concord to do an effective job of accommodating Negro newcomers, left Oakland to absorb the bulk of the East Bay minority population. In looking at developments since 1940, one cannot avoid being struck by the fact that the tremendous growth of the Negro population in Oakland is matched only by the unyielding exclusionist practices of most surrounding communities. Thus, Oakland's Negro ghetto has been compounded and reinforced.

The Oakland City Unified School District has been sharply criticized for operating de facto segregated schools and assigning minority teachers chiefly to predominately minority schools. Some personnel have been accused of having prejudicial attitudes toward Negro students. The major criticism, however, has been in regard to the boundaries established for Skyline High School.

While some individuals and groups have criticized certain policies and practices of the district, other individuals and groups have stoutly defended them. Demands that the Skyline High School boundaries be changed have been met by demands that they be maintained as they are. The administrative staff has denied charges that its school personnel <u>is</u> prejudiced toward Negro students.

The Board of Education has found itself in the midst of ever-mounting pressures. Law suits and boycotts have been threatened. There have been warnings that future local financial support may be jeopardized. While

the Board has listened to any and all opinions, policy changes apparently have been infrequent, limited, and established with extreme caution.

In the opinion of the Commission staff, no good would be served by attempting to prove or disprove the claims and counterclaims that have created a near impasse in the Oakland City Unified School District. However, certain conclusions have been reached and are presented as follows:

(1) Because of the rising percentage of Negroes in the Oakland population, it will become increasingly difficult to achieve a reasonable degree of ethnic balance in the public schools.

(2) Communication between Negro and white groups is generally ineffective. Consequently, there seems to be little understanding of each other's point of view relative to the schools.

(3) Many Caucasians in Oakland undoubtedly believe that schools with a high percentage of Negro students are inferior. When large segments of a white community believe and act as if predominately Negro schools are inferior, many minority group parents come to view such schools as inferior, also, and feel that their rights are being violated if they are required to send their children to them.

(4) It is apparent in Oakland as it is in the country generally that Negroes are no longer willing to accept what they view as barriers and restrictions to full educational opportunities.

(5) There are sufficient detailed studies to provide a basis for implementation of a positive program.

(6) A number of commendable programs and policies have been instituted to expand equal educational opportunities in the Oakland City Unified School District. Unfortunately, many people in the community are either unaware of the programs or fail to understand or appreciate their value. There are a number of reasons for this. For example, most of the programs seem to have been inadequately interpreted not only to the community at large but even to those the programs were specifically designed to benefit. Moreover, some of the programs were limited in scope and thus had a meager impact. The following list includes a number of policies and programs which have been instituted to broaden the scope of equal educational opportunities:

A. A long-term policy of employing qualified minority teachers

B. The establishment of limited open enrollment policies

C. The institution of compensatory education programs

D. District participation in the Inter-Agency Project

E. In-service training programs in intergroup relations for administrators and teachers

F. The engagement of the services of local, state and nationally recognized consultants in intergroup relations and compensatory education programs

G. The reduction of the teacher-pupil ratio at McClymonds High School

H. The appointment of a director of Special Urban Educational Services

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Oakland Board of Education should give immediate attention to the task of formulating a Master Plan for the operation and development of the Oakland City Unified School District. The comprehensive reports and recommendations of the Citizens' Advisory Committees on Oakland School Needs in the areas of finance, school housing and equal educational opportunities should provide an excellent start toward the accomplishment of this task, especially if the reports are properly coordinated. The Master Plan should be designed to improve the quality of education for all children and make provisions to eliminate or lessen the impact of de facto segregation at all levels.

2. As an agency whose responsibility to Oakland youth is unparalleled, the Oakland Board of Education should be cognizant of all programs and projected programs which have been developed by agencies and jurisdictions to affect social change and which have educational implications for children in the Oakland area. The Board should advise and make recommendations to such agencies and jurisdiction on matters relating to the present and future educational program of the schools.

3. The Oakland Board of Education should call upon appropriate federal, state, county and local agencies--both public and private--to join forces to reverse the trend toward the further containment of ethnic minorities and low socio-economic groups in the core area of the city.

4. It is recommended that the Oakland Board of Education authorize the Oakland City Unified School District to provide channels through which complaints, questions, and problems involving intergroup relations may be evaluated. If inequities are found to exist, prompt and appropriate action should be taken to correct them. Consideration might be given to designating this task as a function of the Office of Special Urban Educational Services.

5. It is recommended that advisory groups, representative of all levels of the professional and classified staff, be organized to assist in the assessment of the quality of intergroup relations and programs designed to provide equal educational opportunities in the Oakland schools. The coordination of the work of these groups might be the function of the Office of Special Urban Educational Services.

6. It is recommended that the Oakland Board of Education include in its Master Plan a program to "phase out" the use of the McClymonds High School Plant as a regular high school facility. Consideration might be given to using the site and buildings for other purposes. For example the facilities might be used for continuation education programs, adult education programs, administrative offices, or other purposes as may be dictated by the needs of the Oakland City Unified School District or community.

7. As a means of achieving a more reasonable balance of ethnic groups in certain Oakland senior high schools, it is recommended that ninth grade students of the 1964-65 class at Madison, Hoover, and Lowell Junior High Schools be granted the option of attending high schools as

designated below:

Madison:	Castlemont or Skyline
Hoover:	McClymonds or Skyline
Lowell:	McClymonds or Skyline

Each student shall be guaranteed enrollment in the high school he selects.

Appendix A

Section 363 of the Education Code:

The State Board of Education may, upon recommendation of the Director of Education, establish in the Department of Education a commission to assist and advise local school districts in problems relating to racial, religious or other discrimination in connection with the employment of certificated employees. The commission shall also, upon request from a district, advise and assist school districts in problems involving the ethnic distribution of pupils and school attendance areas.

Appendix B

Reports, Studies, Documents, and Materials Relating to Ethnic Problems in the Oakland Public Schools

Oakland Board of Education; Reports of the Superintendent

Progress Report of Study and Action Relating to Civil Rights Problems and Compensatory Education Programs, March 31, 1964.

Appendix to Progress Report of Study and Action Relating to Civil Rights Problems and Compensatory Education Programs, March 31, 1964.

Cultural Diversity and the Oakland Public Schools. (Proceedings of in-service program for administrators), August 29, 1963.

Open Enrollment Plan for Skyline High School, April 27, 1964.

Oakland Inter-Agency Project School Program, August 28, 1962.

Compensatory Education in Oakland, October 25, 1963.

Report on State Testing Program, Fall 1962, October 22, 1963.

Student Behavior Policies; Report to the Public.

Reactions and Comments of the Superintendent of Schools and Administration to the Fair Employment Practices Commission Report on the Oakland Unified School District, July 17, 1964.

Factual Data Relating to the Recommendations of the Citizens Advisory Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity, July 21, 1964.

Oakland Board of Education. Report of the Equal Educational Opportunities Committee of the Citizens Advisory Committee on Oakland School Needs; Charles B. Howard, General Chairman. May 26, 1964.

Oakland Board of Education. Report of the Finance Committee of the Citizens Advisory Committee on Oakland School Needs. Charles B. Howard, General Chairman. May 26, 1964.

Oakland Board of Education. Report of the School Building Committee of the Citizens Advisory Committee on Oakland School Needs. Charles B. Howard, General Chairman. May 26, 1964.

Oakland Federation of Teachers. The Culturally Deprived in Oakland Schools.

Oakland Educational Association. Resolution and Statement on De Facto School Segregation and Compensatory Education.

Appendix B - Continued

Nolan, Robert L. Oakland School Segregation: De Facto OR De Jure? Statement to Oakland Board of Education by Robert L. Nolan, School Director. March 3, 1964.

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Equality Is Not Negotiable. Public statement by NAACP.

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; A letter and statement to the Oakland Board of Education on de facto segregation and the educationally disadvantaged. September 19, 1963.

City of Hayward. Report of the Housing Subcommittee of the Mayor's Human Rights Interim Advisory Committee. Stanley W. Blackfield and Robert O. Cohn June 11, 1964.

Baymount District Community Council, "Summary of Findings and Recommendations of Special Baymount Council Subcommittee on School Boundaries and Equal Educational Opportunities in the City of Oakland." August 7, 1964.

East Bay Conference on Religion and Race, Interim Subcommittee on Religion and Race. Statement to the Oakland Board of Education August 4, 1964.

California Fair Employment Practices Commission. An Investigation Under Section 1421 of the California Labor Code of the Oakland Unified School District 1962-63. C. L. Dellums, Commissioner; Hugh Taylor, Consultant.

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Record, Wilson C. "Minority Groups and Intergroup Relations in the San Francisco Bay Area." Institute of Governmental Studies; University of California at Berkeley, 1963.

Hunter, Floyd. "Housing Discrimination in Oakland. A Study Prepared by the Oakland Mayor's Committee on Full Opportunity and Council of Social Planning--Alameda County." Berkeley: Floyd Hunter Company, 1963-64.

Oakland. "Oakland East" A Solution to Urban Decay. Wayne E. Thompson, City Manager. July 22, 1964.

Oakland. Preliminary Outline of a Comprehensive Proposal for an Anti-Poverty Program. Inter-Agency Project, June 3, 1964.

Appendix C

CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION DECLARATION OF POLICY WITH REFERENCE TO DE FACTO RACIAL SEGREGATION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

(Adopted June 14, 1962)

In its historic decisions of May 17, 1954, the Supreme Court of the United States declared that segregation of school children on account of race or color, even where physical facilities and other tangible factors are equal, inevitably results in unlawful discrimination. In California, by law and custom, we have historically operated on the democratic principle of equality of educational opportunity for all children, without regard to race or color, and for this reason it was easy for us to accept the underlying hypothesis of that decision and applaud its rendition. We now find, however, that primarily because of patterns of residential segregation, some of our schools are becoming racially segregated in fact, and that this challenge to equality of educational opportunity must be met with the full thrust of our legal authority and moral leadership.

We fully realize that there are many social and economic forces at play which tend to facilitate de facto racial segregation, over which we have no control, but in all areas under our control or subject to our influence, the policy of elimination of existing segregation and curbing any tendency toward its growth must be given serious and thoughtful consideration by all persons involved at all levels. Wherever and whenever feasible, preference shall be given to those programs which will tend toward conformity with the views here expressed.

Appendix D

Article 1.5. Establishment of School Attendance Areas and School Attendance Practices in School Districts

2010. State Board Policy. It is the declared policy of the State Board of Education that persons or agencies responsible for the establishment of school attendance centers or the assignment of pupils thereto shall exert all effort to avoid and eliminate segregation of children on account of race or color.

2011. Establishment of School Attendance Areas and School Attendance Practices in School Districts. For the purpose of avoiding, insofar as practicable, the establishment of attendance areas and attendance practices which in practical effect discriminate upon an ethnic basis against pupils or their families or which in practical effect tend to establish or maintain segregation on an ethnic basis, the governing board of a school district in establishing attendance areas and attendance practices in the district shall include among the factors considered the following:

(a) The ethnic composition of the residents in the immediate area of the school.

(b) The ethnic composition of the residents in the territory peripheral to the immediate area of the school.

(c) The effect on the ethnic composition of the student body of the school based upon alternate plans for establishing an attendance area or an attendance practice.

(d) The effect on the ethnic composition of the student body of adjacent schools based upon alternate plans for establishing an attendance area or an attendance practice.

(e) The effect on the ethnic composition of the student body of the school and of adjacent schools of the use of transportation presently necessary and provided either by a parent or the district.